

Message Text

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PAGE 01 OSLO 01903 01 OF 03 201318Z
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INFO SECDEF WASHDC
USMISSION USNATO
USNMR SHAPE
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE
CINCLANT NORFOLK VA
AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 3 OSLO 1903

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: AWACS, NATO, OVIP (BROWN, HAROLD), CH, IC, SP, NO, TU
SUBJECT: SECDEF BROWN'S APRIL 12-13 VISIT TO NORWAY

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: SECDEF HAROLD BROWN'S APRIL 12-13 VISIT
SERVED TO REASSURE THE NORWEGIANS OF THE FIRMNESS OF AMERICA'S
COMMITMENT TO THE DEFENSE OF NORWAY. IN ADDITION, THE
SECRETARY'S STRAIGHTFORWARD HANDLING OF SEVERAL ISSUES SUCH
AS THE GREY ZONE AND THE CLAYTOR MEMORANDUM WHICH HAD BECOME
MINOR IRRITANTS IN THE BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP, REMOVED
ANY DOUBTS CONCERNING EXISTING USG POSITIONS. IN ADDITION
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SECRET

PAGE 02 OSLO 01903 01 OF 03 201318Z

TO HIS MESSAGES OF SUPPORT AND CONFIDENCE, THE SECRETARY
EMPHASIZED THE ABSOLUTE NEED FOR ALL NATO ALLIES TO ALLOCATE
SUFFICIENT RESOURCES TO MAKE THE LONG-TERM DEFENSE PROGRAM
A REALITY AT THE MAY SUMMIT. SECRETARY BROWN'S TWO PRESS
CONFERENCES AND HIS SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS WITH THE PRIME
MINISTER, THE FOREIGN MINISTER AND THE DEFENSE MINISTER
GAVE HIM AN OPPORTUNITY TO ANSWER MANY OF THE QUESTIONS

HIGH LEVEL GON FIGURES AS WELL AS MEDIA REPS HAD HAD ON THEIR MINDS FOR A NUMBER OF MONTHS. THE TIMING, TONE AND CONTENT OF SEC BROWN'S VISIT COULD NOT HAVE SERVED AMERICAN AND NORWEGIAN INTERESTS BETTER. END SUMMARY.

2. SUBSTANCE OF THE VISIT: LONG-TERM DEFENSE PROGRAMS/ DEFENSE EXPENDITURES. DURING SECDEF'S DISCUSSIONS WITH PRIME MINISTER NORDLI, DEFENSE MIN HANSEN AND FONMIN FRYDENLUND, SEC BROWN UNDERSCORED THE GROWING NECESSITY FOR NATO TO UNDERTAKE A PROGRAM TO REDRESS THE SERIOUS SHORTCOMINGS IN ITS CONVENTIONAL DEFENSE POSTURE. THE REQUIREMENT FOR SUCH A REMEDIAL PROGRAM WAS ALL THE MORE PRESSING NOW THAT WE HAD ENTERED A PERIOD APPROACHING STRATEGIC NUCLEAR PARITY WITH THE EAST. THE THREE PERCENT REAL ANNUAL GROWTH IN ALLIANCE DEFENSE BUDGETS AGREED TO EARLIER, HE UNDERSCORED, IS THE MINIMUM FIGURE NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE THE GOALS OF THE LONG-TERM PROGRAM. HOWEVER, SECDEF POINTED OUT TO HIS HOSTS, THE ALLIES MUST NOT LOSE SIGHT OF THE FACT THAT THIS THREE PERCENT CAN BE MULTIPLIED THROUGH THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GREATER EFFICIENCY WHICH WOULD FLOW FROM MORE STANDARDIZATION AND INTEROPERABILITY AMONG THE MEMBERS. ACHIEVING THE THREE PERCENT GROWTH RATE IS ADMITTEDLY DIFFICULT, THE SECRETARY COMMENTED, BUT IS VITALLY IMPORTANT FOR ALL OF US TO WORK TOWARDS DESPITE THE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS WE ALL FACE. AFTER POINTING OUT THE ECONOMIC ADVANTAGES THAT COULD DEVELOP ALONG THE TWO-WAY STREET, THE HARD FACT, THE SECRETARY SAID, WHICH
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 OSLO 01903 01 OF 03 201318Z

WE ALL MUST FACE, WAS THAT THE FIRST PRIORITY OF THE ALLIANCE WAS DEFENSE, NOT GENERATING JOBS. IN IMMEDIATE TERMS, THE TREATMENT OF THE LONG-TERM PROGRAM WILL BE CRUCIAL TO THE SUCCESS OF THE DPC AND THE WASHINGTON SUMMIT.

3. WHILE ALL OF HIS NORWEGIAN HOSTS LISTENED ATTENTIVELY TO SECDEF'S COMMENTS ON THE LONG-TERM PROGRAM AND THE NEED FOR ALLIED SUPPORT AND AGREED WITH HIS ASSESSMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT OF SUCH REMEDIAL ACTION, THEY EMPHASIZED AT THE SAME TIME THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE NORWEGIAN ECONOMIC SITUATION AND CONCLUDED THAT THE COUNTRY WOULD BE UNLIKELY TO EXCEED A TWO PERCENT GROWTH RATE IN ITS DEFENSE BUDGET FOR THE NEXT TWO TO THREE YEARS.

4. DEFENSE COMMISSION REPORT: DURING THEIR DISCUSSIONS WITH SECRETARY BROWN, PRIME MINISTER NORDLI AND FONMIN FRYDENLUND BOTH EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE RECENTLY RELEASED DEFENSE COMMISSION REPORT WHICH, THEY SAID, REFLECTED NORWAY'S CONTINUING COMMITMENT TO NATO AND ITS INTEREST IN IMPROVING ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE COMMON DEFENSE (SEE OSLO'S 1829 FOR OUR INITIAL ANALYSIS OF THE COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATIONS).

5. US NAVAL PRESENCE IN THE NORWEGIAN SEA: MIN OF DEFENSE HANSEN

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PAGE 01 OSLO 01903 02 OF 03 201418Z
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NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15 SP-02 ICA-11 TRSE-00 NSC-05
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S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 3 OSLO 1903

AND HIS COLLEAGUES REFLECTED A DEEP CONCERN OVER RECENT REPORTS THAT THE AMERICAN NAVY MAY NOT BE ABLE TO OPERATE IN THE NORWEGIAN SEA DURING WARTIME. SECDEF REPEATED THE STRONG STATEMENT HE HAD MADE IN APRIL 10 TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE TO THE EFFECT THAT AMERICAN POLICY CALLED FOR THE US NAVY TO OPERATE IN AREAS OF HIGH RISKS, AND THAT SPECIFICALLY THESE INCLUDED THE NORWEGIAN SEA AND THE MEDITERRANEAN. SECRETARY BROWN EXPLAINED THAT THE CLAYTOR MEMORANDUM WAS PART OF AN INTERNAL DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE EXCHANGE ON WHAT SIZE THE NAVY SHOULD BE IN ORDER TO PROVIDE A COMFORTABLE DEGREE OF RISK FOR A PARTICULAR DEGREE OF THREAT.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 OSLO 01903 02 OF 03 201418Z

HE UNDER-SCORED DURING HIS DISCUSSION, HOWEVER, THAT THE FORCE THAT THE US EXPECTS TO HAVE MUST BE OF A SUFFICIENT SIZE TO OPERATE WITHIN THE NORWEGIAN SEA ALTHOUGH NOT NECESSARILY IN THE BARENTS SEA OR IN THE KOLA GULF. THE NORWEGIANS EXPRESSED SATISFACTION WITH HIS CLARIFICATION WHICH WAS REPEATED TO GOOD EFFECT DURING HIS PRESS CONFERENCES.

6. AWACS: SEC BROWN EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THE STRONG SUPPORT THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF NORWAY HAD GIVEN TO THE AWACS PROGRAM AND SAID THAT HE FELT THE TIME FOR THE CRITICAL DECISION WAS APPROACHING AND THAT IN FACT THE US GOVERNMENT EXPECTED AND HOPED THAT IT WOULD BE TAKEN AT THE MAY MEETING. THE NORWEGIANS COMMENTED THAT WHILE THEY HAD AGREED TO ACCEPT THEIR PURCHASE SHARE, THE AWACS PAYMENT SCHEDULE COULD NOT BE MORE INCONVENIENT FOR NORWAY AS IT CALLED FOR THE EXPENDITURE OF MONIES DURING A TIME OF SHORT FUNDS, I.E., BEFORE 1984. FURTHER, THEY SAID THAT WHILE THEY WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE ESM/MARITIME SURVEILLANCE CAPABILITY THEY REALIZED IT WAS BETTER NOT TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF PLANES PURCHASED INITIALLY. SECDEF EMPHASIZED THAT AWACS HAD POLITICAL AS WELL AS MILITARY SIGNIFICANCE IN THAT IT WAS THE BIGGEST ALLIANCE-WIDE PROJECT OF THE MOMENT AND WOULD BE TAKEN AS A KEY INDICATOR OF NATO'S ABILITY TO WORK TOGETHER ON MAJOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS. THE GON REPS AGREED AND SAID THEY ASSUME THAT ONCE THE GERMANS GAVE THE PROGRAM THEIR FULL SUPPORT THE NORWEGIANS WOULD "TAG ALONG".

7. REINFORCEMENT/PREPOSITIONING: IN HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH THE MOD AND HIS STAFF, SEC BROWN UNDERSCORED THAT THE US WANTED TO BE AS HELPFUL AS POSSIBLE IN THIS AREA AND THAT WE IN FACT WERE LOOKING AT IT WITH THE NORWEGIANS IN THE ONGOING BILATERAL STUDY OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW TECHNOLOGY. THE POSSIBLE ROLE OF THE US MARINES, AND THE COB AGREEMENTS
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 OSLO 01903 02 OF 03 201418Z

WERE IMPORTANT ELEMENTS OF THE REINFORCEMENT QUESTION. AS TO HOW MUCH PRESTOCKAGE WAS REQUIRED, SEC BROWN SAID HE REALLY DIDN'T KNOW BUT THAT WE WERE PRESENTLY STUDYING THE SUBJECT AND THAT WE WOULD CONTACT THE GON AT STAFF LEVEL LATER. WHAT WAS IMPORTANT, MR. BROWN ADDED, WAS THAT THE ISSUES OF REINFORCEMENTS AND RECEPTION FACILITIES, BE FACED. GENERAL HAMRE, THE CHIEF OF DEFENSE, SAID THAT THE FIRST STEP IN THE AREA HAD BEEN TAKEN WITH THE INITIATION OF THE SAFLANT/POL STORAGE PROJECT AND THAT THE NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENT STOOD READY TO DISCUSS ANY OTHER PRE-STOCKAGE POSSIBILITIES THAT WOULD ARISE IN CONNECTION WITH THE VARIOUS REINFORCEMENT PLANS. HOWEVER, GENERAL HAMRE SAID, THERE WERE SEVERAL DETAILS OF REINFORCEMENT THAT HAD TO BE TAKEN UP BEFORE WE COULD BEGIN DISCUSSING PRE-

STOCKAGE REQUIREMENTS; THESE WERE SUCH MATTERS AS THE POINTS OF ARRIVAL AND THE SPECIFIC ROLE OF THE US MARINES AS WELL AS THE POSSIBILITY OF THEIR ARRIVING FROM AN INTERMEDIATE BASE IN SCOTLAND. ALL THE NORWEGIAN OFFICIALS AGREED, HOWEVER, THAT PREPOSITIONING WAS AN ABSOLUTE PREREQUISITE TO MAXIMIZING MARINE REINFORCEMENT OF THE NORTHERN FLANK.

8. SPAIN AND CHINA: FONMIN FRYDENLUND BRIEFED SEC BROWN ON HIS RECENT TRIPS TO SPAIN AND CHINA (THE SUBSTANCE OF THE FONMIN'S CHINA REMARKS WAS CONTAINED IN OSLO 1558 AND 1789-- ALSO SEE USNATO 3790). ON SPAIN, MIN FRYDENLUND SAID THAT HE WAS SURPRISED DURING HIS VISIT TO BE TOLD BY BOTH THE SPANISH PRIME MINISTER AND FONMIN THAT THE TIMETABLE FOR CONSIDERATION OF NATO MEMBERSHIP SEEMED TO HAVE ADVANCED AND THAT IT WAS CONCEIVABLE THAT IT COULD BE PRESENTED TO THE CORTES IN NOV/DEC 1978 OF JANUARY OF 1979 (SEE OSLO 1844 FOR DETAILED DISCUSSION OF SPANISH ISSUE).

9. THE ER/RB WEAPON: THE NORWEGIAN FONMIN COMMENTED THAT NORWAY IS VERY SATISFIED WITH PRES CARTER'S DECISION ON THE ER/RB WEAPON. ADMITTING THAT IT WOULD BE CRITICIZED BY OTHER COUNTRIES IN EUROPE, HE SAID THAT WAS NOT THE CASE HERE, ALTHOUGH THERE SEEMED TO BE RATHER GENERAL DISSATISFACTION

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SECRET

PAGE 04 OSLO 01903 02 OF 03 201418Z

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PAGE 01 OSLO 01903 03 OF 03 191801Z POSS DUPE
ACTION EUR-12

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S E C R E T SECTION 3 OF 3 OSLO 1903

WITH THE WAY IN WHICH THE ISSUE WAS HANDLED. SEC BROWN EMPHASIZED THAT WHILE WE HAVE LARGELY CORRECTED THE IMPRESSION IN THE US THAT THE WEAPON (WHICH, HE SAID, IN FACT REPRESENTS A RELATIVELY MINOR TECHNICAL CHANGE) WAS A REVOLUTIONARY OR IN-HUMAN AND DESTABILIZING WEAPON, THE IMPRESSION IN THE EUROPEAN PRESS ENCOURAGED BY THE SOVIET WAS GOING TO BE HARDER TO REBALANCE BECAUSE OF THE POLITICIZATION AROUND THE ISSUE. THE IMPORTANT POINT TO BEAR IN MIND NOW, M4. BROWN SAID, WAS THAT THE PRESIDENT CARTER'S FINAL DECISION HINGED ON THE SOVIETS' RESPONSE. THE NORWEGIANS AGREED THAT EMOTIONALISM HAD TENDED TO LEAD THE EUROPEAN DEBATE AND THAT MOSCOW'S ATTITUDE IN
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SECRET

PAGE 02 OSLO 01903 03 OF 03 191801Z POSS DUPE

THE ARMS CONTROL NEGOTIATIONS WAS VERY IMPORTANT.

10. ICELAND: FONMIN FRYDENLUND COMMENTED THAT RELATIONS BETWEEN ICELAND AND NATO SEEMED TO BE MORE RELAXED TODAY THAN THEY HAVE BEEN FOR YEARS. THE ATTITUDE OF THE PRESENT ICELANDIC FONMIN WHOM HE SEES REGULARLY, FRYDENLUND SAID, REFLECTS THIS CHANGED TEMPERATURE. HE SUGGESTED THAT IT MIGHT BE HELPFUL FOR THE PRESENT ICELANDIC GOVT IF THE USG COULD MAKE SOME GESTURE OF ASSISTANCE TOWARDS THE INCELANDERS BEFORE THEIR JUNE ELECTIONS. SECDEF RESPONDED THAT THE PROBLEM WAS THAT ASSISTANCE TO A COUNTRY WITH A VERY HIGH PER CAPITA INCOME LIKE ICELAND WAS DIFFICULT TO EXPLAIN TO CONGRESS. FRYDENLUND AGREED BUT SAID THAT HE WAS SURE SUCH A BOWN TOWARDS REYKJAVIK WOULD HELP RELATIONS.

11. GON/TURKISH RELATIONS. FONMIN FRYDENLUND DESCRIBED HOW NORWAY WAS ENGAED IN DEVELOPING LINKS WITH TURKEY. HE SAID THAT TURKISH PRIME MINISTER ECEVIT WAS VERY EAGER FOR CONTACTS WITH NORDIC NATIONS BECAUSE HE IS CONSIDERING USING SCANDIAVIAN SOCIETY AS A MODEL FOR THE MODERNIZATION OF TURKEY. HOWEVER, ACCORDING TO FRYDENLUND, NORWAY IS THE ONLY SCANDINAVIAN COUNTRY WHICH HAS RESPONDED TO HIS OVERTURES. FRYDENLUND HIMSELF VISITED TURKEY IN JANUARY 1978 AND MENTIONED TO SECDEF THAT ECEVIT WAS COMING TO OSLO ON HIS OWN INITIATIVE

IN JUNE. IN RESPONSE TO FRYDENLUND'S QUESTION CONCERNING THE PROSPECTS FOR THE AMERICAN MILITARY AID PACKAGE TO TURKEY, SECBROWN SAID THAT THERE WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE A MAJOR DEBATE IN CONGRESS AND THAT A VERY IMPORTANT FACTOR WILL BE WHETHER THE TURKS MOVE TOWARD SETTLING THE CYPRUS SITUATION.

12. PRESS CONFERENCES AND MEDIA TREATMENT: DURING HIS TWO APRIL 12 PRESS CONFERENCES IN NORWAY, SEC BROWN WAS ABLE TO RESPOND WITH CONSIDERABLE SUCCESS TO POPULAR NORWEGIAN
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 OSLO 01903 03 OF 03 191801Z POSS DUPE

CONCERNS. THE FOLLOWING HEADLINES WHICH APPEARED IN ALL MAJOR OSLO DAILIES ARE ILLUSTRATIVE: CLEAR US GUARANTEE, SEC DEF HAROLD BROWN IN OSLO; THE US NAVY CAN BE PUT IN THE NORTH; DEFENSE OF NORTHERN FLANK NOT WEAKENED.

13. WHEN ASKED ABOUT THE AMERICAN ATTITUDE TOWARD THE GREY ZONE AGREEMENT; SEC BROWN RESPONDED THAT THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION CONSIDERS QUESTIONS LIKE THE GREY ZONE AGREEMENT A MATTER OF PREDOMINANT BILATERAL INTEREST BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES AND THAT QUOTE IT IS NOT FOR THE UNITED STATES TO INTERFERE WITH WHAT NORWAY SEES AS A PRINCIPALLY FISHERIES MATTERS. CERTAINLY, WE THINK THAT THE STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS NEED TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT, BUT AGAIN, THAT IS A MATTER FOR NORWAY TO DO AND NOT FOR THE US TO TELL NORWAY HOW TO DO. UNQUOTE THE SECRETARY'S STRONG, UNEQUIVOCAL STATEMENTS MANAGED TO SUCCESSFULLY COUNTER MUCH OF THE RECENT MEDIA CRITICISM THAT THE US WAS MEDDLING IN NORWEGIAN AFFAIRS OVER THE GREY ZONE ISSUE.

14. COMPLETE TRANSCRIPTS OF THE TWO PRESS CONFERENCES WERE CONTAINED IN OSLO 1799 AND 1803.

15. COMMENT: SEC DEF HAROLD BROWN'S VISIT TO NORWAY PROVIDED PUBLIC, HIGH POLITICAL LEVEL REASSURANCE OF AMERICAN SUPPORT FOR NORWAY. NORWEGIANS AND THE GON BOTH APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN PLEASED BY THE VISIT. THE APPEARANCE OF SECRETARY BROWN AT THIS TIME SIMULTANEOUSLY REASSURED THEM OF THE CONTINUING SUPPORT OF THEIR MAJOR ALLY AND ALSO POINTED OUT BOTH THE BENEFITS AND THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ALLIANCE LINK.
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